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*Die Berliner Handschrift des Decameron*, von A. TOBLER. [Sitzungsberichte der Königlich Preussischen Academie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin]. It is perhaps, after all, not surprising that a work so well known and so often printed as the Decameron should still have no critical edition which the future historian of the Italian language could use with any safety. And yet the Decameron is certainly one of the most important monuments of early Italian prose. But then, the pretty stories and graceful style of Boccaccio have doubtless rather repelled than attracted the severe labors of the grammarian. At last, a good beginning has been made, and if those who follow Prof. Tobler perform their task with the same thoroughness and keenness, we shall ultimately have an edition of the Decameron of great value to the grammarian and lexicographer.

In this pamphlet we have:—

1. An accurate description of a MS. of the Decameron the writing of which is not later than the very beginning of the fifteenth century. This MS. is part of the Hamilton collection of the Berlin library;
2. A carefully compiled list of the corrupt passages which are common to the Berlin text and to the Mannelli text;
3. A list of passages in the Berlin text which offer a better reading than that of the Mannelli text; many of these readings have already been introduced into editions of Boccaccio from other MSS., or conjecturally;
4. Corrupt readings which are found in the Berlin MS. but not in the Mannelli text;
5. A list of divergent readings either of which may be adopted without changing the meaning of the text;
6. A list of divergent readings where the adoption of one or the other would change somewhat the meaning of the text.

Prof. Tobler shows conclusively that the Berlin MS. is not a copy of the Mannelli, and makes it appear very probable that the reverse is the case.

P. B. MARCOU.

Cambridge, Mass.

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#### BRIEF MENTION

Apropos of Dr. Schilling's recent review of

the Joynes-Meissner German Grammar in these columns, the Editors desire to state that the entire review was furnished to the NOTES at one time, its subsequent division into two parts being simply incidental to editorial considerations; so that the spirit and fairness of the article in question can be judged only with reference to its effect as an undivided whole. As for the title of the review, we are assured that it was already chosen before the appearance of the article on the same subject in our December number; and the paper throughout was written quite independently of any suggestion from the author of that article.

Professor F. Max Müller has published a new volume, which comprises a collection of essays, notes, and letters relating to etymological, anthropological and antiquarian topics, and has named it 'Biographies of Words, and the Home of the Aryas' (Longmans, Green & Co., New York). This volume belongs to that class of semi-popular scientific writings in which Max Müller has few equals in the charm of captivating generalization and readableness, and it is sure to find its peculiar place on every shelf by the side of the household "Chips." General readers will here find some things to satisfy their craving for those inspired deductions that spurn the scientific scaffolding by which ordinary mortals raise themselves to the apprehension of a truth; here is the philologist, to their own liking, not painfully and weakly ever holding fast to the dead weight of the logic of facts lest, perchance, the wings of his spirit may waft him through the free air of direct perception towards the very sun and center of absolute knowledge. But if Max Müller knows how to give one a refreshing airing, and to disappoint one afterwards by not providing the healthful meal for which the appetite has been sharpened, this is but one side of his character. He is a great scholar, and always gives the scientific man something to think about. Whatever our tastes may be we are all obliged to read his books, whether for admonition of how subjects should, or should not be treated; of how things are, or are not. In the present instance the 'biography' of the word *persona* is alone enough to

save the whole volume. The author is at his best in sketching the life of this word that has played a marvelously significant rôle through many centuries.

In the 'Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science,' Fifth Series, No. XI, is to be found a succinct and interesting treatment of "Seminary Libraries and University Extension," by Dr. H. B. Adams, Editor. This account is confined, of course, to history and allied subjects, but, as the system here noted is precisely the same for linguistic investigations, we would heartily recommend the article to all modern language professors seeking light on Seminary Methods. The same writer has published 'The Study of History in American Colleges and Universities' (Bureau of Education, Circular of Information No. 2, 1887) which, we hope, will suggest to some of our earnest workers the propriety of a similar study for the modern languages, or a department of them, in the United States. A history of English, German or Romance studies in our colleges would reveal an extraordinary development in the past few years of an important branch of education. No greater revolution has taken place in any department of our educational system than that which might be traced out just here.

We have received a contribution that is likely to do important service for the science of dialectology: 'Grammatikalische und lexikalische Arbeiten über die lebenden Mundarten der langue d'Oc und der langue d'Oïl,' by Dr. D. Behrens [Deprint from the IX. vol. of *Zeitschrift f. Neufranzös. Spr. u. Litteratur*. Oppeln u. Leipzig; Eugen Franck's Buchhandlung]. In this monograph the writer has presented in the space of 125 octavo pages an historical survey of all the principal publications bearing on North and South French dialects, with here and there short characterizations of the work noted. Every one who has attempted to make such a list will be able to appreciate the difficulties and amount of labor attending it, and feel the more grateful to Dr. B. that he has compiled a bibliography so useful and so nearly complete as this is. For all those interested in dialect matters it is an indispensable help; to supple-

ment it will be comparatively easy, now that the first steps in this direction have been taken. It remains to continue the good work by publishing bibliographies of original works in the individual *patois*. When these texts shall have been made accessible to foreign scholars, the materials necessary for dialect investigation, especially for the important categories of Syntax, Morphology and Semasiology, will be at hand, and will doubtless attract a goodly number of zealous workers.

Sievers' Anglo-Saxon Grammar holds an altogether unique place, being the only full treatment of the early forms of our language according to the most accurate scholarship. It is therefore a just matter of natural pride that an American translator has made this indispensable work accessible in English. A further element of gratification is the generous acceptance, throughout our country, of Professor Cook's version that has encouraged him so soon after the author's own second edition to give us the corresponding edition of the translation (Ginn & Co., Boston). When Professor Cook first came to the preparation of his English version it will be remembered that he could not escape the responsible duty of making many variations from the original, by incorporating a large body of additional matter which the author had collected and published separately subsequent to his first edition. By carefully performing this editorial task, Professor Cook at once gave us the work in a form that properly stood mid-way between the first and second editions of the original. After the author had himself brought his work to embrace his recent modifications, it is clear that the English version could be made to correspond more closely to the original than before. And this has been accomplished by Prof. Cook, whose second edition conforms in all essentials to the second edition of the author. Prof. Cook has however added a new feature which deserves to be mentioned. He has not only expanded and corrected the somewhat unsatisfactory 'index of words' of the original, but has added five supplementary indices in which are collected the Gothic, the O. H. German, the Old Saxon, the Old Norse, the Latin and the Greek words that receive inci-

dental consideration in the body of the work.

Any criticism of this excellent grammar can only pertain to minor details, and these will not be entered upon at this time. Merely one observation shall be made, namely, that there are serious omissions in the chapter on the Numerals. The student will in vain turn to these pages for information on the method of counting by subtraction by means of *læs*, *wana* or *bútan*, as for example, Chron. 641, *he rixode twa læs xxx geara*; Chron. 972 *he wæs þa ana wana xxx wintra*, etc. So too we should be told how fractional parts were expressed; and *healf* in expressions of number is a very interesting and important phenomenon. Nor is the word *twæde* recorded here, and yet it is not of rare occurrence, a single example may suffice: *wylle-ponne on cetele oð þ se wæta sie twæde on bewyllled*, Leech. II, 332.

The work of translation has been so admirably done that it were quite unfair to lay stress upon the few instances of slight inadvertence. It is seldom that Professor Cook has, as in the case of the first period of § 31, relaxed his hold upon his author, and it were useless to look for another instance of such a curious and rather mischievous mistranslation as that in § 340 of *ðé úsic* by "we whom," instead of 'us whom;' the ambiguity of *nos* *quos* must have tripped the unwary.

In a recent circular issued by the American Dante Society, the Council of the Society "desire to call attention to the collection of works on Dante in the Library of Harvard College, in Cambridge, a collection which the Society has made it one of its special objects to bring together, and to which it yearly adds as many works as it is able to procure. The collection now numbers over a thousand volumes, and may be freely consulted at the Library by every one, and under certain restrictions may be used by members of the Society who live at a distance. A detailed Catalogue is in course of publication in the Harvard University Bulletin, and will be issued separately as soon as completed." All correspondence with reference to the collection should be addressed to Mr. William C. Lane, *Asst. Librarian*, Harvard College Library, *In charge of the Dante Collection*.

It is with pleasure that we are able to announce the establishment in New York City of an organisation entitled: "The Modern Languages Publishing Company," whose object will be to publish from time to time works that may meet the demands, both in matter and method, of the recent development of modern language study in America. The address of the company is 150 Nassau Street.

A useful help to students of Molière has appeared in the second revised edition of F. Hermann Fritzsche's 'Molièrestudien: Ein Namenbuch zu Molière's Werken, mit philologischen und historischen Erläuterungen' (Berlin; Weidmannsche Buchhandlung). The first edition of this work was published in 1868, since which time important and varied researches have been carried on in this branch of French literature both in and out of France. The text followed is that of Despois and Mesnard, and the object of the author is to give here the results of recent investigation as to the explanation of proper names and character-types used by the poet. To this end evidence is drawn from his contemporaries and predecessors, and the studies are laid under contribution which the author has published from time to time in Herrig's *Archiv* and in Schweitzer's *Molière-Museum*; The range of names has been extended and hence, naturally, a number of new articles added, while only a few of the old ones have remained untouched; the most of them have been entirely recast: "Was vor zwanzig Jahren galt gilt grossenteils heute nicht mehr." Working in this spirit, the author has given us virtually a new book, as will be recognised at a glance by those familiar with the older treatise. The onomastic interpretations here bear both upon general and special significations: general, as to their origin and primitive meaning; special, as to their restricted use by Molière and other comic poets before and after his time. Hence, in addition to etymological notes, the author often gives the poetic character of the names as represented in tradition, in the manners and customs of the time, etc., and the treatise thus becomes a valuable contribution to the general history of onomatology as well as specially to that of the great French poet. The *Namenbuch* covers about

230 octavo pages, preceded by a preliminary study of thirty pages on proper geographical and ethnographical names.

Encouraged by the publication of 'Les Misérables' in the original French, WILLIAM R. JENKINS (New York) proposes to publish 'Les Travailleurs de la Mer' and 'Notre-Dame de Paris,' during the coming year. As the last number of his interesting series, 'Romans Choisis,' the same publisher has given us 'La Neuvaïne de Colette,' a bright and amusing romance recently published anonymously in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.

The perplexing question, Can the art of English Composition be taught? is admirably answered in one of the recent 'Monographs on Education' (D. C. Heath & Co., Boston) entitled 'English in the Preparatory Schools,' by Ernest W. Huffcut, Instructor in English in Cornell University. Teachers in secondary schools should read this pamphlet if they would know the true doctrine of primary instruction in English. It would be difficult to point to a more rational discussion of the practical matter of early laying the foundation of a clear and effective style in writings. This can be done, as the writer shows, in accordance with the natural laws of the mind's operations and growth, and by the avoidance of the system, historically in bad repute, of requiring "the tale of the bricks" when no straw is provided. The 'essay writing' bondage that embitters so many experiences in early life can legitimately be converted into a willing and pleasurable service that will surely produce results of just the desired kind.

The American reprint of Lamartine's charming idyll, 'Graziella,' by W. R. Jenkins (850 Sixth Ave., N. Y.) calls again attention to the industry and enterprise of this house, which is rapidly supplying us with a choice of French standard works of the recent literature. The appearance of the volume, to correspond with its contents, is bright and attractive. Among the announcements for the near future we remark 'Cinq Mars,' by Alfred de Vigny, with English notes, and H. Truan's 'Les Grands Ecrivains Français.' The latter will be a most valuable addition to the means of presenting the chief points of French literature in the class-room.

### PERSONALS.

Professor Joseph L. Armstrong has been appointed to the chair of English and Modern Languages in Trinity College, N. Carolina. Mr. Armstrong attended Randolph Macon College (Va.) for some time, but was compelled to leave before taking his degree. After quitting college (1878), he spent two years in teaching, then passed one year (1880-81) at the Johns Hopkins University, devoting himself especially to English; after this he went to the University of Leipsic, where he spent one year studying with Wülker, Brugmann and Techmer. Returning to America, he was engaged in teaching for the following two years, when he was appointed Professor of English and Modern Languages in Central College (Mo.), and he remained there during 1885-86. His health failing, he resigned and spent the following year in teaching an academic school in Va., whence he passed to the appointment noted above.

Professor J. S. Griffin was appointed at the opening of the present Academic year to the chair of Modern Languages in Garfield University (Kansas). He was graduated at Abingdon (now Eureka) College (Ill.) in 1873, and received the Master's degree from the same institution three years later. After graduation, he spent ten years as Principal and Superintendent of Graded Schools in Illinois, and three years as principal of a private school in Tennessee. He is now engaged on a translation of Droysen's 'Grundriss der Historik' and Florian's 'Gonzalve de Cordoue.'

Mr. F. V. Paget was appointed at the beginning of the present academic year, Instructor in French and Spanish in the University of California (Berkeley). Mr. Paget is a native of France, where he received his early education; in 1862, he obtained the diploma of Bachelier ès lettres, at the Faculté des lettres of Strasbourg, and in 1865, that of Bachelier ès sciences, at Grenoble. In 1876, he came to America and has been teaching privately and in schools of San Francisco up to the date of his present appointment. He is an occasional contributor to the *Overland Monthly*, where he has published papers on Lamartine and Victor Hugo.